

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1.-9. (Cancelled).

10. (New) A system for maintaining protection of digital content distributed for playback, the system comprising:

a computing platform, executing a playback application, configured to:

receive a command to playback the digital content;

select a server located on the Internet as a source of the digital content;

receive encrypted digital content from the server;

forward the encrypted digital content without decrypting to a communication link;

a peripheral device coupled to the communication link and configured to:

receive the encrypted digital content from the computing platform;

decrypt the encrypted digital content into decrypted digital content; and

convert the decrypted digital content to analog content for playback.

11. (New) The system of claim 10, wherein the command is received by a user at a graphical user interface of the executing playback application.

12. (New) The system of claim 10, wherein the communication link is one of a USB bus, a PCI bus, or a FireWire bus.

13. (New) The system of claim 10, wherein the peripheral device is further configured to:

receive a status request from the computing platform over the communication link; and

send status information to the computing platform over the communication link in response to the received status request.

14. (New) The system of claim 13, wherein the computing platform is further configured to:

receive the status information, and forward the encrypted digital content when the status information indicates the peripheral device is ready to process more data.

15. (New) The system of claim 10, wherein the encrypted content is one of streamed encrypted content or stored encrypted content.

16. (New) A method for maintaining protection of digital content distributed for playback, the method comprising:

receiving encrypted digital content from a computing platform, the computing platform having received a command to playback the digital content and selected a server as a source of the digital content, the computing platform having further received

the encrypted digital content from the server and forwarded the encrypted digital content without decrypting the same;

decrypting the encrypted digital content into decrypted digital content at a peripheral device; and

converting the decrypted digital content to analog content for playback.

17. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein the command is received by a user at a graphical user interface of a playback application executing on the computing platform.

18. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein the encrypted content is received over a peripheral bus, the peripheral bus comprising a USB bus, a PCI bus, or a FireWire bus.

19. (New) The method of claim 16, further comprising:
receiving a status request from the computing platform; and
sending status information to the computing platform in response to the received status request, the status information indicating whether the peripheral device is ready to process more data.

20. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein the encrypted content is one of streamed encrypted content or stored encrypted content.

21. (New) A system for maintaining protection of digital content distributed for playback, the system comprising:

an interface configured to receive encrypted digital content from a computing platform, the computing platform having received a command to playback the digital content and selected a server as a source of the digital content, the computing platform having further received the encrypted digital content from the server and forwarded the encrypted digital content without decrypting the same;

a processor configured to decrypt the encrypted digital content received from the computing platform into decrypted digital content; and

a converter configured to convert the decrypted digital content to analog content for playback.

22. (New) The system of claim 21, wherein the command is received by a user at a graphical user interface of a playback application executing on the computing platform.

23. (New) The system of claim 21, wherein the encrypted digital content is received over a peripheral bus, the peripheral bus comprising a USB bus, a PCI bus, or a FireWire bus.

24. (New) The system of claim 21, further comprising:
means for receiving a status request from the computing platform; and

means for sending status information to the computing platform in response to the received status request, the status information indicating whether the processor is ready to process more data.

25. (New) The system of claim 21, wherein the encrypted content is one of streamed encrypted content or stored encrypted content.

26. (New) A method for maintaining protection of digital content distributed for playback, the method comprising:

receiving a status request at a peripheral device from a computing platform;

sending status information to the computing platform in response to the received status request, the status information indicating that the peripheral device is ready to process data;

receiving encrypted digital content over a peripheral bus from the computing platform, the computing platform having received a user command to playback the digital content at a graphical user interface of a playback application executing on the computing platform and selected a server as a source of the digital content, the computing platform having further received the encrypted digital content from the server over the Internet and forwarded the encrypted digital content on the peripheral bus without decrypting the same, wherein the encrypted content is one of streamed encrypted content or stored encrypted content;

decrypting the encrypted digital content into decrypted digital content at a peripheral device; and

converting the decrypted digital content to analog content for playback.